

American Administration's Tussle with Philippine Outlaws

BY FREDERIC J. HASKIN.

Governor Miller, the American Exile.

Capt. Cary Crockett, the Latest Hero.



A Type of Filipino Agitator.

Captured Leader of Filipino Outlaws.

MANILA.—The effort to stamp out Ladroneism in the Philippines has produced a number of heroes whose exploits were fully equal to Funston's sensational feat of penetrating the jungle and capturing Aguinaldo in his lair. The last American to distinguish himself is Cary I. Crockett, a captain of constabulary. This young man is from Virginia and comes well by his fighting spirit, being a descendant of Davy Crockett of Alamo fame. He came to the Philippines as a wagon master in General Lawton's division.

He has performed valiant service in a number of expeditions against the outlaws. On the last of these he was absent eleven months, during which time he "hiked" 2,000 miles through the tangled fastnesses of Samar, the unruly island which the Spaniards never conquered, and which the Americans have not wholly succeeded in pacifying. About half of these Samarites are fanatical desperadoes, and the question of their subjugation is one of the problems which confronts the administration.

Young Crockett was sent into the country with a small detachment of constabulary to penetrate a district infested with hostiles. There were roads in Samar and when the troops are sent after these bandits the morning is spread by means of sentries who blow conch horns from the hillsides. By this means of signaling the approach of an enemy the alarm is echoed over the valleys for hundreds of miles in a few hours' time.

Fierce Fight in Jungle.

Crockett and his men soon found themselves in a deserted country, but they held pluckily to the trail. The young American and his faithful natives suffered every conceivable hardship. They waded in mud to their waists; were thrown into streams by capziled boats, and marched many weary days and weeks with wet feet. As a consequence half of the command were soon ill from fever and rheumatism. Only on three occasions were they able to corner the outlaws and force the fight. Once when the command was separated, a force of 200 Ladronees were surprised by a squad of thirteen of the constabulary. By the time Crockett with only sixteen men arrived to reinforce them eight of the original thirteen had been killed.

The fighting which took place on this occasion was of the most desperate character. The American was in the heart of the jungle, miles from the nearest army post; his support consisting of only a small, worn-out, ragged force of Filipino soldiers. Yet the outlaws were finally repulsed, leaving seventy-three of their number dead on the field. Crockett did not lose a single man of his squad of sixteen reinforcements who had saved the situation. That the plucky Virginian was in the thick of the fight is shown by the fact that he was shot and cut four times and grazed twice. He himself killed eleven of his antagonists. If he had fallen during the fight his men would have been annihilated.

Had to Eat Snakes.

Their greatest hardships came later. There was no doctor to treat their wounds, which they had to sew up with hemp. Before they could reach the coast their rations gave out and for fifteen days they suffered terribly from the tortures of starvation. At first they tried to get along by eating roots and bark, and by making salt

from sea water. Bats, hawks and lizards soon became acceptable food. They managed to exist for several days on the meat obtained from a shark and a devil fish. Finally, when despairing, they encountered two large fifteen-foot snakes, which they proceeded to kill and eat. Crockett eventually delivered his brave command through to the coast without losing a single man, except those killed in the fight. Although the expedition ended several months ago, Captain Crockett has not fully recovered from his wounds. He is considered one of the most dauntless men that ever served in the Philippines, and has been given a medal for his bravery.

Lieutenant Edward Y. Miller is another American who has won renown in the Philippine service. Miller is governor of the Province of Paragua, the most isolated portion of the Philippine archipelago. He, too, has successfully led native troops against the renegades. He is the governor of a zone containing 200 small islands, the total land area of which is 6,000 square miles. In this province there are 30,000 savages who speak ten different languages, yet the total white population consists of only thirteen Americans.

Never Had a White Visitor.

These exiles are Governor Miller and his secretary, two constabulary officers, three school teachers, one customs inspector, and three discharged soldiers who have embarked in the lumber business. The only white women in the province are the wives of the governor and the customs inspector. These two ladies live 150 miles apart. Governor Miller's capital is 100 miles from the nearest port of any other province in the Philippines, and is 275 miles from Manila. Although the Millers have been in Paragua three years they have never had a white visitor. The people of their islands know almost nothing about the ways of civilization, because the Spaniards made no attempt to occupy this portion of the archipelago when they were in possession here.

The outlaws of the Philippines, called Ladronees, and bandoleros, have long existed in this part of the world. They rarely molest white people, devoting their energies to preying upon helpless members of their own race. The statement has been made that a white man could walk from one end of the islands to the other with perfect safety, and while there are a few localities, like Samar and Mindanao, that are unsafe, they are exceptions. A short time ago two prominent capitalists from America, who contemplated making railway investments here, were in the interior alone for weeks, entirely traversing the proposed route without being molested in any way. Yet since Mr. Miller's arrival a band of outlaws shot up a village within three miles of the city limits.

Seeing that the guerrillas do not interfere with the whites, the question may arise in the mind of the reader why the officials pay any attention to them. Until they are suppressed it will be almost impossible for that portion of the rural native population which would engage in peaceful pursuits to do so with any degree of safety. The outlaws demand tribute from a community, and if this is not forthcoming they swoop down upon it to murder, loot and burn.

As Cruel as the Turk.

The atrocities the desperadoes commit on these occasions are too horrible to describe. They dash through the streets murdering men, women and children alike. They visit special vengeance upon all who dare to aid the authorities in any way, cutting off their lips, gouging out their eyes, and perpetrating

other barbarities too horrible to mention. When the constabulary is sent after them they take to the hills like ardent cowards and will never show fight until they are cornered in their lair. However, some of them who are religious fanatics, sometimes give battle in the most foolish manner. The report of Captain Crockett, relating to the expedition mentioned at the beginning of this article, cites a number of instances where lone fanatics, armed with nothing more formidable than a sharpened corn knife, advanced boldly in to the open and dashed toward his column. After these brave but foolhardy wretches were despatched they were found to have paper charms upon their persons, which they implicitly believed rendered them invulnerable to injury.

While the people of Manila are responding to the effort the Americans are making to introduce civilization, the greater portion of the inhabitants of the rest of the archipelago are still unshocked in the ignorance and barbarism that marked the lives of their forefathers. The independent rural natives are preyed upon by the bandits and their accomplices, the local bosses known as caciques; while laborers living on most of the great plantations are like so many serfs. The owners of these estates often treat their employees with heartless brutality.

Pitiful Plight of Serfs.

An American told me of one case which is typical. A man 42 years of age was sentenced to prison on the charge of having killed a carabao belonging to his master. This man was born on the plantation and had never been outside its boundaries until he was brought in court to be tried on the trumped-up charge. He had never received a penny for the service of a lifetime, his only compensation being a supply of poor cotton clothing and a measure of rice. On account of hardship and overwork his health had been undermined so that he was of no more use as a laborer, and his comrades were forced to swear that he had maliciously killed a carabao, which in reality had died of old age. Being of no further use to his master the latter had, without honor or pity, used the courts to get rid of him.

Slavery is generally brought about by a poor man becoming indebted to a plantation owner. No matter how trivial the sum may be, if the debtor enters the employ of the rich man to discharge his obligation by personal service, he is doomed. The master will see to it that the debt is never discharged. The debtor and his whole family will be forced to continue in the employ of the feudal lord until their servitude becomes permanent. Considering that millions of poor people who have been subjected to such humiliating and unfruitful toil for hundreds of years, it is no wonder they are not enthusiastic about work, and that hundreds of them eventually find their way to the mountains to join the outlaw bands.

Driven to Outlawry.

It is said that one of the noted bandolero chiefs who is now causing a great deal of trouble in one of the southern provinces, was formerly an independent farmer who turned bandit because the local hemp buyer, who was a cacique, continually cheated him out of the fruits of his toil. This farmer would carry his little crop on his back over mountain trails for miles, only to receive a few cents for it, when in reality it was worth as many dollars. If he tried to sell to any one but the boss he was punished. As a consequence of such treatment, he gave up trying to make a peaceful living, and on more than one occasion has visited terrible vengeance for his wrongs.

In explaining the workings of the

cacique system, a country school teacher told me how the edibles were secured to reward a peasant for the first Taft party that went through the islands, and the same will apply to the delegation now touring the archipelago. Every native within miles was assessed a chicken or a pig, or some item of produce. Enough supplies were raised in this way to feed fifty times the number of people included among the guests. The surplus was put up for sale in the market and the proceeds pocketed by the local officials.

Brigands Are Encouraged.

The poor countryman has no conception of the idea of liberty or personal privilege. He is as much a slave and chattel today as ever. If he dares to rebel against those who hold him in bondage they have the power to crush him in more ways than one. The gov-

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ernment will have to suppress the rule of the petty bosses and feudal lords in the Philippines before there will be justice and prosperity in this benighted land. Striking proof of the wretched state of affairs is shown by a great case now engaging the attention of the courts of Manila. The richest planta-

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PILES

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Dr. G. W. Shores.

Women's Ills.

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